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Geologists awarded contract for uranium search

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IMMEDIATELY

GEOLOGISTS AWARDED CONTRACT
FOR URANIUM SEARCHlloyd-davies/jg
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local, dailies,
broadcast

MISSOULA--

Geologists at the University of Montana, Missoula, and Montana State University, Bozeman, have been awarded a contract to study the possibility that there is uranium near Bozeman.

The award of about \$193,000 was made by the Bendix Field Engineering Corp., which is under contract to the federal Department of Energy.

The 22-month study will involve seven faculty from UM's geology department, three faculty from MSU's earth sciences department and several graduate students.

Project director Ian Lange, UM professor of geology, said that the study is part of a national program that is examining surface water and stream sediment to find if there's a potential for uranium.

The Bozeman-area study will involve field mapping; chemical analysis of soil, rock and water, and radiometric methods--such as the use of geiger counters.

Several sites in Montana already are known for uranium, Lange said. Granite veins near Boulder and sandstone in the Three Forks area are known to contain uranium.

The information from the study will be on public file and made available to mining companies in hopes they will conduct further exploration and make discoveries worth developing. The research is being undertaken because studies show that with diminishing petroleum reserves, nuclear power will be needed more in the next decades for generation of electricity.

Studies also indicate that known domestic resources of uranium--that can be mined--will be strained by the mid-1980s unless new sources are developed.

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Besides Lange, participating faculty from UM are Johnnie Moore, assistant professor of geology and project manager; Robert Curry, professor; Arnold Silverman, professor, Anthony Qamar, assistant professor; David Fountain, assistant professor, and Bob Fields, professor.

MSU faculty are Robert Chadwick, professor of geology; Donald Smith, assistant professor of geology, and Stephen Custer, professor of geology.

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